The National Minorities Development Finance Corporation being the apex body monitors the functioning of the State Channelising Agency i.e. Mahatma Phule Backward Clasess Financial Development Corporation

The Multi-sectoral Plan Development Scheme is a new Scheme and an amount of Rs 2.00 lakhs was disbursed to the Government of Maharashtra during 1995-96. Report from the State Government is awaited

(d) During the current financial year till date the amount spent in the State of Maharashtra on these Schemes is nil.

[English]

Assistance for Fodder Banks

2644. SHRI SANAT MEHTA: Will the Minister of ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING be pleased to state :

(a) the details of financial assistance given to each State under the Centrally sponsored scheme viz 'Assistance to State for Feed and Fodder Development' to establish Fodder Banks during 1995-1996 and the current year;

(b) the criteria for giving the said assistance and

(c) the amount spent by each State under this Scheme during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) Financial assistance was provided to the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Orissaduring 1995-96 to establish fodder banks to the tune of Rs. 15.769 lakhs, Rs. 15.00 lakhs and Rs 40.50 lakhs respectively. During the current year no financial assistance has been provided to any State so far.

(b) Assistance is provided on the basis of project proposals received from the State Governments.

(c) Out of the above assistance provided, Rs 15.769 lakhs and Rs. 9.225 lakhs have been spent by the State of Arunachal Pradesh and Karnataka respectively during 1995-96. Fund utilisation certificate from the State of Orissa is awaited.

Decline in Rice Production

2645. SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Stress on increase in rice production" as reported in the *Hindustan Times* dated October 3, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the production of rice in the country have fallen considerably during the past few years;

(c) if so, the factors responsible for such shortfall;

(d) whether the prices of various varieties of rice have also gone high and the exports have also increased; and

(e) if so, the steps the Government propose to take to keep its prices stable?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Yes Sir

(b) and (c) The production of rice has shown a rising trend since 1988-89 except some decline during 1992-93 and 1995-96, which is mainly attributed to unfavourable rainfall and weather conditions and low and imbalanced use of fertilizers.

(d) and (e) The prices of rice have risen moderately which are in tune with the general price rise. The export of rice, on the other hand, has shown an impressive growth particularly during 1995-96. The Government has taken steps to keep the prices of rice stable through demand and supply management by ensuring supplies at fair price shops under PDS. An Integrated Cereal Development Programme is being implemented to improve the production and availability of rice

Welfare of Tribal Youth

2646. SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a self-employment training programme for the tribal youth under the TRYSEM Programme was recently conducted by the Government in Godhra and Panchmahal districts of Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of such programmes conducted in Gujarat during the last three years and the number of tribal youth benefited therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) to (c) Under TRYSEM training to upgrade technical and entrepreneurial skill is imparted to the families living below poverty line to enable them to take up gainful self/wage employment. Minimum of 50% of selected youth should belong to SC/ST communities. The programme is implemented in all the districts of the country including Godhra and Panchmahal districts of Gujarat.

As per guidelines on IRDP and allied programmes of TRYSEM and DWCRA, TRYSEM training programmes are organised by each DRDA under the guidance of the governing bodies of DRDAs as per the approved District Annual Plan. However, monitoring is done on combined basis for SCs/STs youth on State as a whole basis.